

MEPI

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## MEDREGION UPDATE

Regional Office Tunis

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## Cafes of Citizenship: A forum for Youth Dialogue



MEPI grantee the United Association for Training Children and Youth (ASUEEG) in Morocco is holding a series of forums entitled "Cafes of citizenship: A forum for youth Dialogue". These forums come as part of the MEPI-funded project "I am Moroccan Citizen".

Youth discussed and presented ideas and materials related to citizenship, including the Moroccan constitution. The forums were moderated by Mr. Mustapha Saaliti, a professor of social psychology, who led the students in interactive exercises

The forums were marked by enriching discussions that covered youth's political participation, environmental issues, and civic activities that develop their communities.

Participants discussed the role of youth in the construction of Morocco of tomorrow. Youth have interacted with the topics discussed with great interest and they presented a list of project proposals, which they discussed with the moderator,

The discussion also revolved around the issue of poor representation of youth in politics and low voter turnout, which provides an opportunity for a reproduction of responsibilities among the same



Moroccan youth during Cafes of Citizenship forums

The project, is engaging 100 young men and women from three areas in and around Marrakesh on the responsibilities of good citizens.

Cafes of citizenship are run and directed by youth. The purpose of the cafes of citizenship forum is to introduce young Moroccans to various aspects of active citizenship.

designed to familiarize them with methods of civic engagement and prompt them to think about their own roles as young citizens. The forums did not only aim to educate young people about the rights they have as citizens but also to foster their sense of belonging to Morocco as an urge to contribute to the development of their communities.

people and never gives the possibility to youth to take part in the decision making process.

ASUEEG is launching nation-wide competition among youth, associations and educational institutes, entitled "I am a Moroccan citizen" for the best video or picture of a responsible behavior of a young citizens. ■





## MEPI Representatives

We often receive a lot of questions reference the different roles and people who work with the organizations, so we wanted to write a short article clarifying some of your Project Representatives here at MEPI...

Once your application arrives to MEPI or the local American Embassy or Consulate, a local MEPI Coordinator and Administrator screens each application for completeness and prepares all of them for review by a MEPI Committee in that respective country. The MEPI Committee consists of representatives from different sections of the Embassy. As a voting committee, they decide which applications to forward for consideration to a grant. The MEPI Coordinator and Administrator may also help support the Regional Office with negotiations, communication, and monitoring.

Once your grant is cleared and accepted by your respective Embassy or Consulate in your

country, your application is forwarded to our Regional Office in Tunis, Tunisia. From there, our Program Team will assign it to a Program Analyst, who will work with you to develop a Statement of Work (SOW), which will form the basis for all of your activities, objectives, deliverables and measurables. Later, your Program Analyst will work with you, the project's participants, and the community to evaluate the success of your grant and its impact in the area.

You will also have a Project Officer (PO) assigned to your grant. This individual usually works at the American Embassy or Consulate in your respective country. The Project Officer will approve the final version of your SOW and will serve as the programmatic monitor for your grant on behalf of MEPI, visiting your organization and providing feedback about your activities. Furthermore, the PO will keep the local

Embassy or Consulate informed on all matters relating to your Grant.

Once the SOW is finalized and approved by the PO, your application is forwarded to the Grants Unit at our Regional Office in Tunis, where we assign a Grants Officer Representative (GOR) to serve on behalf of the Grants Officer (GO). The GOR will negotiate the budget, make any necessary changes to the SOW, and sponsor your grant through the approval and clearance process at MEPI. Once approved, the GOR, will keep the Grants Officer informed on the status of your grant, review and approve all of your reports, and help process your Payment Requests. The GOR, if the opportunity arises, might also come visit your grant to conduct a monitoring visit and financial review. If you have any questions or concerns or need amendments, please contact your GOR right away. Your GOR will keep both the

PO and the GO informed on all matters dealing with the grant.

The Grants Officer (GO) is the ultimate approving authority on the award. S/he approves and signs the grant on behalf of MEPI and is the only person who can authorize changes to your budget, activities, or award. The GO is responsible to the U.S. Government for the money awarded to your organization and oversees all elements of the grant.

You may also be contacted by our Public Diplomacy (PD) Representative at MEPI, who tries to capture the great activities and success stories you have. S/he forwards these articles and pictures to our Washington, D.C. office and posts them on our website. Our PD Representative is also the link to our office on "YouTube," "Facebook," and the Internet. ■

## MEPI Medregion Office News



*Amel Ben Aouali*

MEPI Regional Office is very pleased to welcome our new Grants Analyst, Amel Ben Aouali. Amel was born in Tunis, Tunisia where she is currently living with her husband. At the beginning of her career, Amel worked as a counsel for a financial institution for few years. She also has an extensive working experience with Mediterranean Centre for

Health Risk Reduction as communication and research assistant serving various

global humanitarian programs.

Amel pursued her studies at the University of Rene Descartes Paris V, where she earned her Masters degree in International Economic Law and Development. She researched and drafted a thesis on co-operation development and fundamental human rights.

Given her background and interest for the changing

environment in the Middle East and North Africa region, she wanted to move forward for a new challenging experience and joined the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) contributing to initiatives aimed at fostering civil societies and the democratic process in the region. ■



## Teachers and Students Receive Hands-on Learning Training on Sciences and Technologies

As part of MEPI's goal of inspiring youth to acquire the expertise they need to compete in today's changing environment, MEPI project Jerusalem Incubator for Extracurricular Education and Scientific Innovation is developing the students scientific and technology skills and building the capacities of the teachers of sciences through hands-on training workshops. One hundred and seventy talented students, aged 14-17, and 20 teachers have benefited from this project being implemented by Al-Nayzak for Supportive Education and Scientific Innovation, a non-profit non-partisan Palestinian Arab organization.

Al-Nayzak held a total of 24 sciences and technology sessions for students. Teachers also attended these sessions and received on-job training using different methods and tools of teaching science than those usually adopted by science teachers in Palestinian schools. Such sessions improved their abilities to interact with their students and deliver information and knowledge in a manner that improve students' scientific problem-solving skills.

Teachers and students also attended 12 Creative thinking sessions that included activities that develop the sensory and intellectual skills of participants. Al-Nayzak also organized summer camp, which included intensive training sessions on the following educational programs:

Science is the Fruit of Life program (Chemistry and Biology), physics program, electronics and robotics, technology and computer hardware.

Participant teachers attended 10 scientific movies that aim to improve and develop their teaching mechanisms and tools and simulate their curiosity in science. These movies addressed the following topics: static and dynamic electricity, waves and sounds, human circular system, nuclear radiation, astronomy, the magnetic field, human

reproduction and fetus development, the eye anatomy and Newton Laws.

Al-Nayzak for Supportive Education and Scientific Innovation conducted surveys to measure the impact of the projects on the students and teachers.

Proficiency tests indicated an increase in students' performance in comparison to the proficiency tests they performed in the recruiting phase. Interviewed parents, moreover, stated that their children's performance in school distinctively improved after completing the project.

Progress reports from teachers indicated that students continued to express increasing interest in math and sciences subjects especially that they acquire new learning skills based on more interaction with the scientific subject rather than reading and memorizing it.

The results of the surveys indicated an increase in students' ability to comprehend and relate to the information and knowledge that teachers' presented, and further indicated high positive ratings of the teachers who participated in the project.

Students indicated that the new techniques and methods that the teachers



acquired had a very positive impact on their understanding and interest in the information the teachers offered. ■

### Stay Connected with MEPI

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# Spotlight on MEPI Alumni

## Economic and Social Transformation in Jordan and Egypt

As part of MEPI's economic programs focusing on entrepreneurship, MEPI Alumni Network/Jordan and Young Arab Entrepreneur (YEA) held a session addressing Economic and Social Transformation in Jordan and Egypt.

Speakers in the seminar from the Economic and Social Council of Jordan discussed the Jordanian and Egyptian structural adjustment reform; governance; private sector development, and political economy. Speakers stressed that international and domestic efforts should go back to a micro-level of analysis where growth appraisal is coupled with socioeconomic indicators and where governance is examined vertically across the society at large.

Examining reforms in Egypt and Jordan, the speakers called for rethinking the relationship between economic reform and governance.



Conventional analyses of economic and governance reforms overlook the complex relationships between social, political and economic factors within a country that affect

reform success. They said this is evident by contrasting the extensive literature praising the successful reform progress achieved by countries such as Jordan and Egypt with the failure to achieve significant institutional and legislative reforms that would lead to more effective governance, as well as persistent inequality. In both countries no new social or political forces have been drawn into a new social contract. Instead of reforms being transformative, a complex interplay between political and economic agents has sustained a status quo based on weak governance institutions. This is an outcome of the international community's unwillingness to press real reforms, as well as cautious domestic elites. Consequently they maintain an efficient balance, targeting reform as well as maintaining political stability. ■



### Middle East Partnership Initiative

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. MEPI partners with local, regional and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments.

#### MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed in the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the MEPI Regional Office Tunis administers MEPI local grant projects in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and West Bank/Gaza. Each year, MEPI provides a significant number of local grants directly to local organizations based in the Middle East and North Africa. These Grants promote reform and civic activism at the local and national levels in the Middle East and North Africa, build the institutional capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and strengthen civil society.

### Stay Connected With MEPI

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